

Davis, Mueller exhibit art during October

By April Barbe
Associate Editor

A reception honored the October art exhibit, featuring Denise Stringer Davis and Mark Mueller.

Mueller is originally from Nacogdoches and graduated from Nacogdoches High School in 1983. He then went into the military for four years, later moving to Dallas to work as a cooperate secretary. After a while, he decided to take an art class. This led to a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, with a sculptural emphasis, from the University of Texas at Arlington.

While in his last semester at UT-Arlington, he created "Grain A Tristesse," which means seed of sadness.

"It was my way of rolling up into a little ball and hiding," said Mueller. "At the same time, the flower has grown, and now I'm the seed," he added.

Mueller works with 3-D sculp-

tures using materials like hydrocol, wood, ceramic and fiberglass, among other things.

"I use anything I can find at Home Depot," Mueller said.

His works featured at the AC gallery include: "Evil?" a hydrocol sculpture, "Grain A Tristesse" cast of hydrocol/wood, "Fragmented" ceramic, "Torso It" ceramic, "Fifth Element" cellulose, "Mort" cast bronze/hydrocol, "The Old Man" wood, "Belief" fiberglass.

Awards that he has received include: first place award for "Evil?," Texas Sculpture Association summer membership show, July 2, 1999 in Dallas; Citation Award for "Emergence," East Texas Fine Arts Association citation show, Nov. 7, 1998 in Longview; honorable mention for "Birth," Texas Sculpture Association summer membership show, July 10, 1998 in Dallas; Best of Show (sculptural) piece for hope "Transcending Innocence," April

17, 1998 in Dallas; and a department of art history student travel grant from UT-Arlington in March of 1998.

Mueller is a member of the Texas Sculpture Association in Dallas and the East Texas Fine Arts Association in Longview.

All his exhibitions have been in Texas except for one, which was in Albuquerque, NM, in 1998. Believe it or not, Mueller has only been sculpting about three years.

"I try to bring across the emotions and the feelings that I'm going through or have gone through in the past," said Mueller. "It's kind of a way of getting rid of the bad vibes or good vibes," he added.

"Mort," French for evil, was created after two of Mueller's friends were killed in car accidents and another committed suicide. He represents evil as a puppet being controlled by the hand of God.

"It was my way of dealing with it," Mueller said.

Mueller used attic insulation and Elmer's glue to make the "Fifth Element."

This piece represents earth, wind, fire, water and spirit. Mueller draws some of his inspiration from the Egyptian and Meso-American cultures because of the very monolithic and plain figures.

Denise Stringer Davis's "Cover Your Secrets" seemed to be the piece receiving the most feedback at the reception. She is the other artist featured in the show.

"In our society, we've been taught that the body is a negative or dirty thing," said Davis. "As a child I wanted to go swimming, and my dad wanted to take a picture of me in my suit, and he said, 'cover your secrets,' and I covered my breasts, and he said 'no, your other one,'" Davis continued.

"Thinking about that story, our society and how we feel about our bodies, I think we sometimes think negatively," added Davis.